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PLAYDATES IN THE UAE

# Baby & Child

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# *Vaginal steaming*

Yes, it is exactly as it sounds. Before you turn the page in horror, this ancient practice which is popular with celebs such as Gwyneth Paltrow and Chrissy Teigen, is said to be healing. Find out why...



**W**e steam our faces happily. We sit in saunas and steam rooms and, even though the experience is sometimes uncomfortable, we do it because we know that it is good for us. But mention vagina steaming and otherwise open-minded women raise their eyebrows, get a prudish and brush it off.

Ironically we are more than happy to talk about bikini waxing and to put ourselves through pain for our pruning – perhaps because it is related to looking attractive? Gynaecological appointments are also fine, because they are about science and health and doctors.

But as soon as we talk about our vaginas in terms of taking care of them for our wellbeing, suddenly, vaginas are less deserving of our TLC.

When you think about how important this part of our body is – for sex, for producing babies and just for general health, it makes

sense that it deserves some looking after and cleaning.

Liberty Gelderloos, 37, is a certified vaginal steam facilitator here in the UAE. She says, "Vaginal steaming is a process that involves boiling water in a pot, allowing the water to cool to a comfortable temperature, and then sitting, squatting, or standing over the pot so that the steam can reach the vulva, vaginal canal, and the perineum.



"The water is infused with herbs to enhance the healing qualities of the steam. This process has a well-documented history throughout Africa, Eurasia, Oceania, and the Americas."

### WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

As well as being good for fertility, clearing infections and cleansing, steaming is also said to be good for relieving period pains, postpartum care, relief from menopause symptoms such as hot flashes and vaginal dryness, regulating irregular cycles and more.

"Vaginal steaming is how women have been healing their gynecological issues since the beginning of time," says Liberty. "It is still widely used in places such as India and African countries for post-partum healing and has been found in over 70 countries. Unfortunately, in many places it was lost with the rise of modern gynecology.

"These days, it is used in South Korea where they have steaming spas. Almost every woman steams after her period and they use it in hospitals."

### HOW DO WE USE IT?

Peristeam Hydrotherapy, as it is also known, is a new is the process of reading or analysing a menstrual cycle, identifying any imbalances such as stagnation, dampness, excess heat, or dryness, and then creating a plan to improve the issues. "We do this through vaginal steaming, food, lifestyle changes and sometimes acupuncture," says Liberty. "Vaginal steaming works really

well with acupuncture – especially if someone is flood bleeding or trying to conceive."

For post-partum use, studies show that steaming can lower blood pressure, encourage healing of the uterus and labia, help with weightloss, speed up the lochia stage, alleviate pain from stitches, promote bowel regularity and more.

Liberty adds, "It is also thought that steaming has a positive effect as breast milk supply, preeclampsia prevention, incontinence prevention and lots more. It's also beneficial for labour preparation and is safe to start steaming at 37 weeks to soften the cervix and relax the body. However, steaming is contraindicated during pregnancy before 37 weeks."

### DOES IT WORK?

"I had chronic bacterial infections and had basically given up on finding a

permanent solution, as the antibiotics and medication that I was prescribed messed with my PH levels," explains Liberty. "Yes, they killed the bacteria but something was always off and the infection always came back.

"I was listening to a podcast one day and Keli Garza was talking about vaginal steaming and all its benefits. I did my research and started steaming once a week on Friday as a sort of self-care practice and, since that first steam, I have not had an infection in over a year. I also stopped getting cramps before my period and less mood swings. I was completely sold.

"Steaming is an empowering form of therapy women can do at home to be proactive about their health. Many critics say that our uterus is self cleansing, and they are right, but so is our colon, liver and other organs. It doesn't mean they always work 100 percent, which is why there is medicine to help."

Visit [www.libertysteams.com](http://www.libertysteams.com) 🐦

## GETTING STARTED

Liberty says "All women can benefit from steaming, whether they are dealing with a specific issue, or just using it as a self care practice to connect to their womb space. I am especially passionate about introducing steaming to young girls who are just starting on their menstruation journey, it can completely change their experience of their moon time which will benefit them throughout their entire lives."

The four types of blends:

1. U-renew  
*A cleansing blend that clears stagnation in the uterus.*
2. U-empower  
*A gentle blend that strengthens the uterus.*
3. U-purify  
*Disinfecting blend.*
4. U-chill-out  
*Cooling and moisturising blend.*

A consultation including a menstrual cycle analysis, costs Dh350 (this is a 50 percent off offer for a limited time). A steam chair costs Dh525. For enough herb blend for ten steaming sessions, it costs Dh140.

